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Holiday AT HOME

This ensuite has all the glitz and glamour of one you'd find in a five-star hotel.

STORY BY ALEXANDRA FISHBURN
PHOTOGRAPHY BY TONY POTTER
STYLING BY KIRSTIN RANDL-KATALINIC

A rainwater showerhead helps one escape the everyday in this hotel-style ensuite.



If you build a home for a family, it needs to be practical. Open-plan living, a backyard, plenty of storage, separate bedrooms for the kids – the list goes on. The one place you can indulge a little is the master bedroom, creating a private retreat with a few much-needed luxuries. This is exactly what Amgad Kamel did when he designed a four-bedroom home for himself, his wife and their two children in the Hills district of Sydney. Amgad was determined to make the master bedroom and ensuite feel more like that found in a five-star hotel suite and as an interior designer, he had the expertise to carry it off.

SHAPE SHIFTING

To construct their new home, the family went with a local project homebuilder Eden Brae Homes, but Amgad was able to alter the plans as he saw fit. "I had half of the whole upstairs in which to create my bedroom, a change room and the ensuite," he explains. "So I started by accommodating the things I wanted in the bathroom – the double basins, the basic shower, the hand shower – and from that I moved to creating enough space for the change room and then to the bedroom."

It was important to get the ensuite right as it's an expensive process if you change your mind down the track, but this was an especially tough fit-out, as the look Amgad opted for here would have a huge bearing on how the rest of the room took shape, not to mention the success of his five-star hotel concept.

BRING ON THE BLING

Born in Egypt, Amgad studied architecture and interior design in Cairo before moving to Australia in 1991. He developed an interest in mosaics by learning about their history throughout the Middle East. "They're just so detailed and the colours they use are so captivating," he enthuses. "I find working with mosaics in general can create more of an interest rather than working just with the contrasting tiles." It was actually long before the house was built that he spotted a mocha and white-gold glass mosaic and thought it would make the perfect feature tile in a dark and dramatic bathroom. "I loved it, and I always wanted to implement it there," says Amgad, referring to his decision to use it as the starting point for their luxury ensuite.

To add to the drama that the mosaics had introduced, Amgad strayed from Dulux Beige Royale, a warm neutral that he used throughout the rest of the house, and instead chose a rich chocolate colour for the walls called Luck. It's the perfect complement to the mocha tones in the mosaic, while the two mirrors separated by a shimmering light fitting were added to pick up the white gold, giving the whole ensuite a lavish lift. "I just wanted it to be a bit sexier in its approach to give you that five-star hotel feel," he reveals.

ABOVE: The ensuite was designed to be "sexier" in its approach, not unlike what you might see in a five-star hotel.



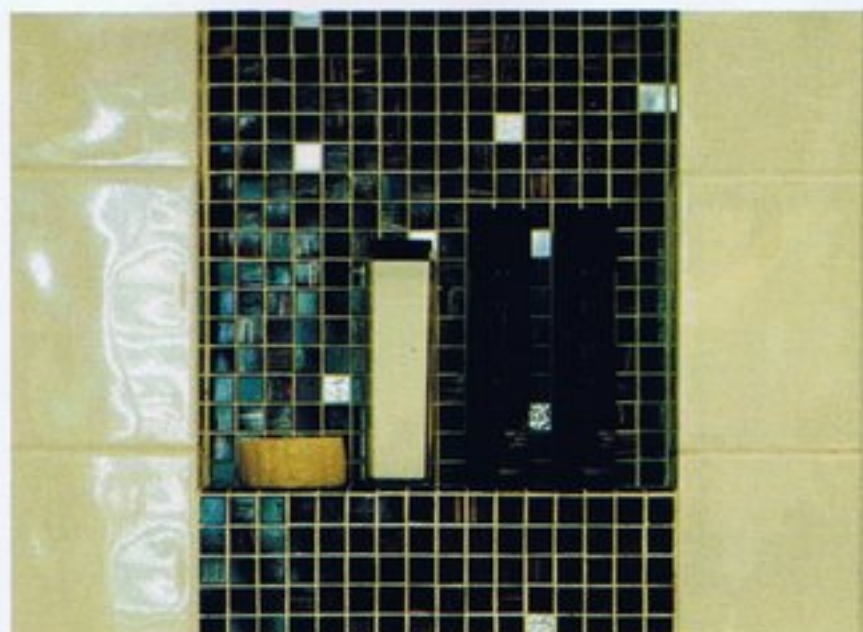
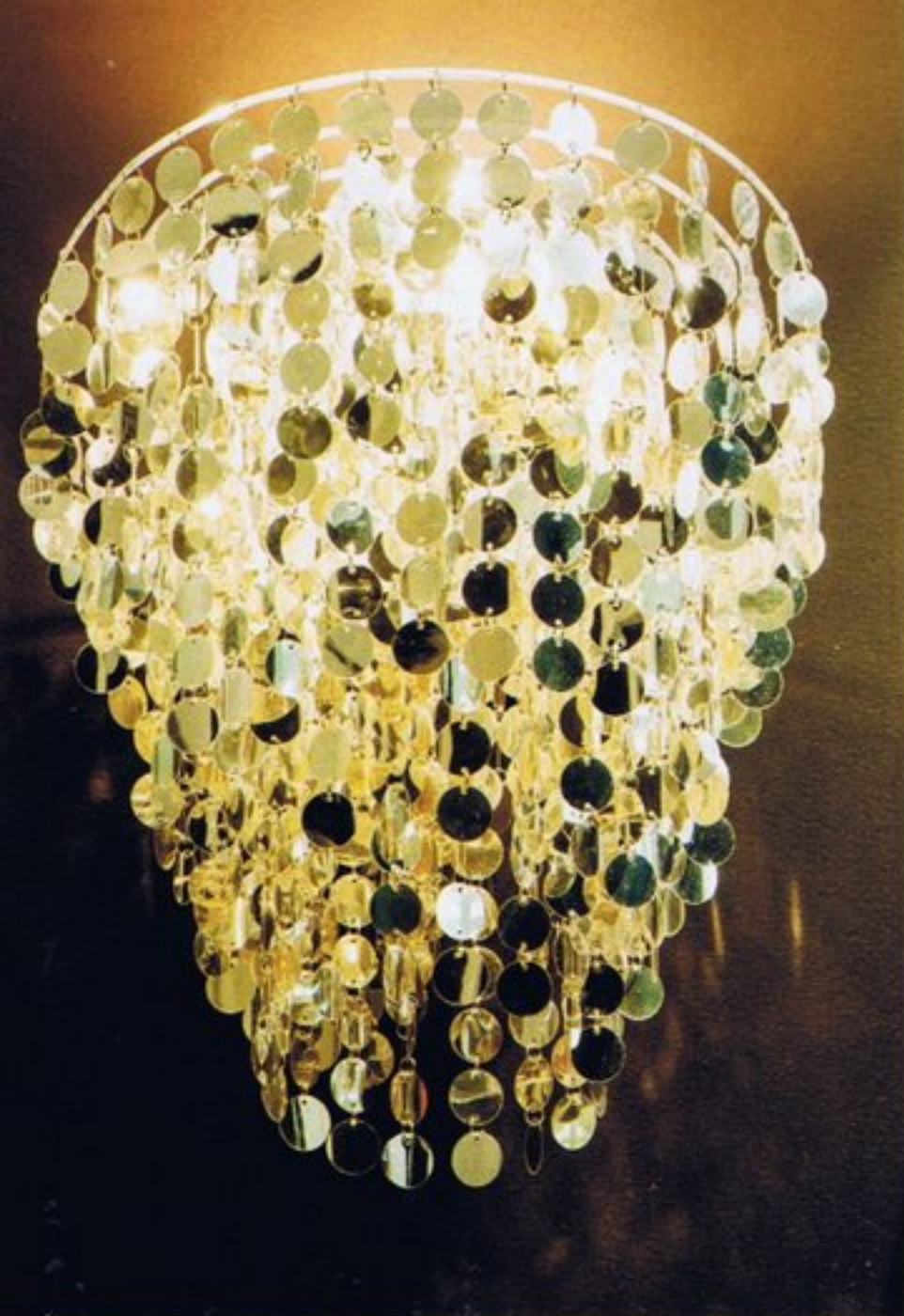
ABOVE: Fragrances and cosmetics are displayed among pieces collected from Amgad's travels throughout the world.

BELOW: The Vento glass mosaic tiles are from Di Lorenzo, a designer tile retailer located in Sydney and Newcastle.

TOP RIGHT: Amgad wanted the bathroom to feel glamorous and there is plenty of sparkle to tempt the eye.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Dulux Luck was chosen as the wall colour to complement the mocha tones in the mosaic tiles.





LEFT: This contemporary chandelier came from Mondo Luce Lighting in Surry Hills.

ABOVE: As well as being glamorous, the bathroom is very practical; in the shower an inbuilt alcove keeps shampoo close to hand.

BELOW: A heated towel rack is mandatory in a luxury ensuite such as this.

"I find working with mosaics in general creates more interest."



Bathroom Essentials

Cabinetry: Ebony Macassar Laminex

Bathroom fittings and tiles: sourced from Di Lorenzo

Lighting: Mondo Luce

Paint colour: Dulux Luck

Interior design: Amgad Kamel ak interiors www.akininteriors.com.au

PRACTICAL MEASURES

To stop the bathroom from entering OTT territory however, Amgad needed to dilute some of this glitz and glamour. To fill out the room he chose a standard white wall and grey floor tile, which gives the eye much-needed rest. He also picked out a matt wood grain laminex for the wall-mounted cabinetry, which actually helps to weigh down all the effervescent elements with its clean lines and practicality.

Amgad has designed the ensuite cleverly so that when you enter – despite the bling – it's obvious the space still functions extremely well. This gives you the opportunity to enjoy the glamour, rather than simply being overwhelmed by it. "The aim was to create a more relaxed mood; sort of warmer and cosier, rather than just a broken up normal bathroom with a cold feel so to speak," Amgad muses. It's the perfect retreat from the stresses of everyday life; a space that awakens the feeling of being on holiday. ■